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Mármol

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Following the fall of Rosas, Mármol returned to Buenos Aires, completing the first Argentine novel, *Amalia* (q.v.) contributing to various journals, etc.; he also became deeply involved with political affairs; after a diplomatic appointment to Chile and Bolivia that he accepted from Urquiza fell through, Mármol joined Mitre and the other porteño leaders who were determined to keep Buenos Aires out of the confederation being formed by the other provinces under Urquiza; served in Buenos Aires senate and on commission to revise 1853 constitution so that Buenos Aires could accept it and the republic could be unified; was sent by President Mitre to Brazil on delicate diplomatic mission on eve of war with Paraguay; was Director of National Library until his death.

MARTIN DE MOUSSY, JEAN ANTOINE VICTOR see MOUSSY, V.
MARTIN DE

MARTIN FIERRO. Gaucho epic poem, written by José Hernández, in two parts 1872, 1879; often called most vigorous example of gaucho poetry; Martín Fierro personifies true Argentine gaucho who rises above every privation and injustice with physical and moral energy that inspire pride in all Argentines; poem written as appeal for aid of gauchos whose way of life was being destroyed and were themselves disappearing as a sector of Argentine society; poem met with immediate success and was revived, two decades later, to receive even greater literary acclaim and popularity as one of most important works of gaucho literature; has special value as historical study of gaucho life, customs, and psychology; so true to life that gauchos themselves welcomed it into their own folk literature; English translation made by Walter Owen, Oxford 1935; New York 1936 (see Gaucho; Gaucho Literature; José Hernández).

MARTIN GARCIA ISLAND. Argentine island in the Río de la Plata that has played important role in the history of the area; discovered by Juan Díaz de Solís (1516) and named for the storekeeper of one of his ships, whom the Spaniards buried there; for the first four centuries following discovery, this small island, approximately 28 miles from the federal capital and less than 600 square miles in area, dominated all river traffic between the interior up the Paraná and Uruguay rivers; all ships drawing more than six feet of water were forced to use either the eastern channel or the much more dangerous western channel along the island, both of them within gunfire of artillery on the island; in 1765 the Spanish royal government, in control of both sides of the Río de la Plata, began to use the island as a detention center for prisoners; during the war for independence, however, and the various wars that followed--with Brazil, with the French, and civil wars--it was the strategic value of the island that mattered and its possession became a vital concern; Guillermo Brown captured it from the royalists (1814), Brazilians occupied it briefly in 1826, Rosas fortified it, Urquiza's Confederation and Buenos Aires province fought

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Martín García Island

over it and later Argentine presidents strengthened it and made it a naval base; during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries the island was a major bone of contention between Brazil and Uruguay, on the one hand, desiring to internationalize the Río de la Plata and Argentina, on the other, claiming to be a national river; by the 1930s and 1940s, with the western channel having been deepened and made the most important one and the navigation rights generally agreed upon, Martín García island once again began to be used as a special prison, usually for political prisoners, with Yrigoyen sent there in 1930, Perón in 1945, and Frondizi in 1962.

See Teodoro Caillet-Bois, *Historia naval argentina* (Buenos Aires, 1944) for military and naval action involving island.

MARTINEZ, ENRIQUE (1789-1870). Patriot; hero of wars of independence; cabinet minister; member of Buenos Aires oligarchy.

Born in Montevideo; entered military career in 1801; fought against British invasions 1806-1807; in 1810 was captain of infantry regiment in Buenos Aires and part of the patriot group that met at house of Rodríguez Peña; joined in patriot activities that year along with José Darregueira, Manuel Belgrano, Tomás Guido, and others; campaigned against Montevideo (1814) and after its surrender joined the Army of the Andes in Mendoza (1815) as Lt. Colonel commanding 8th regiment of line infantry; fought in all major engagements in liberation of Chile: Potrerillos and Guardia Vieja (in Andes) Chacabuco, Curapaligüe, Gavián, siege and assault on Talcahuano, surprise of Cancha Rayada, victory at Maipú; went to Peru in San Martín's liberating army, fighting in assault on Callao, defense of Lima, actions at Torata and Moquegua; by 1821 he was a brigadier general, chief of staff and general-in-chief of the Army of the Andes; later became field marshal; remained in Peru after San Martín's departure, continued fight for independence under Bolívar, then returned to Argentina; on his way home, in Chile, he was placed in command of the remnant (76) of granaderos a caballo and led them back to Argentina.

In 1831 he accompanied General Juan Ramón González Balcarce (q.v.) as chief of staff on campaign into Córdoba; served as Balcarce's minister of war (1832-1833) when latter became head of Buenos Aires government; the return of Governor Rosas after his victorious campaign against the Indians in the south plunged Buenos Aires into political strife that became violent; in this struggle between Rosas' supporters and his enemies, Martínez became the leader of those federalist Buenos Aires landowners and others who opposed Rosas and he persuaded Balcarce to give up his own preferred neutrality and to oppose Rosas; eventually a break came--when Balcarce threatened legal action for slander against a Rosas paper, Balcarce's government was ousted, with a new one under Viamonte coming in to finish his term before Rosas' complete takeover in 1835; Martínez fled to Montevideo where he remained until 1854; supported Fructuoso Rivera in his military campaigns and also served as his cabinet minister; continued in responsible